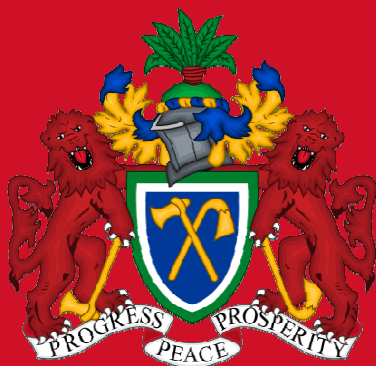


REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA



GAMBIAN DIASPORA EIGHTH REGION OF THE GAMBIA

DIASPORA STRATEGY

GOVERNMENT DIASPORA PLEDGE

The President of the Republic of The Gambia
In the Name of the Government and Peoples
Recognise the Gambian Diaspora
As the Eighth Region of the Country

Requests and requires
all those whom it may concern
to cooperate with and assist
our non-resident citizens
such as to optimise
their productive contribution
to society, economy and polity
for the benefit of all

We Make This Our Solemn Pledge



Banjul, The Gambia – 13 January 2018

GAMBIAN DIASPORA PLEDGE

I, a Gambian in the diaspora,
renew my commitment and hereby declare
that I shall continue to contribute
positively and productively
to Gambian development,
and to progress, peace and prosperity,
as enshrined in our Coat of Arms.

First & Surname:	
Place of Birth (in Gambia):	
Country of Residence:	
Date & Location:	



GAMBIAN DIASPORA STRATEGY

*The Government of
The Gambia
is pleased to present
the key elements of the
Gambian Diaspora Strategy
with specific performance targets,
as incorporated in the
National Development Plan
(2018-21), to be validated
by 50 Ministries,
Departments and Agencies (MDAs)*

GAMBIA DIASPORA DIRECTORATE

A Gambia Diaspora Directorate (GDD) shall be created with a mission: ‘to promote, support and facilitate consultative, productive and purposeful engagement of the Gambian diaspora in national development’.

GDD shall be the lead institution for the implementation, monitoring and review of the Diaspora Strategy; with senior government personnel serving as proactive champions within at least 50 MDAs, embassies and missions. GDD shall promote and coordinate activities relating to Gambia Diaspora Month (15 December to 14 January).

DIASPORA-DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

2,500 senior civil servants and key personnel from non state institutions will be given bespoke and appropriate capacity development on how they can best work with, and support the diverse Gambian diaspora.

The programme will include professional and technical training, coaching and mentoring and other schemes, for government officials, diplomats and other Gambian professionals. These will improve the understanding, skills, capability and motivation of the officials who will be responsible for implementing policies on mainstreaming diaspora-development.

REMITTANCE COST REDUCTION

The Central Bank of The Gambia (CBG), working together with Ministry of Finance, the MSDG Technical Cooperation Project and other partners, shall develop and implement schemes to reduce the transaction cost of remittances sent to The Gambia to an average of 3% or lower by 2021.

Such schemes shall be in line with Target 10.7c of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the Joint Valletta Action Plan, agreed by Europe and Africa.

DIASPORA INVESTMENT & DIASPORA BONDS

The Central Bank of The Gambia (CBG), the Gambia Investment and Export Promotion Agency (GIEPA), working together with Ministry of Finance, the MSDG Technical Cooperation Project and other partners, shall facilitate 20 Diaspora Direct Investments (DDIs) and issue 2 Diaspora Bonds by 2021.

Laws, regulations and practices will be revised where appropriate, to facilitate new and innovative forms of diaspora financing structures. Such structured investments will attract remittances towards durable investments and economically productive activities in the Gambian economy.

DIASPORA DEVELOPMENT FUND

A Diaspora Development Fund (DDF) will be created to co-finance 100 social impact projects, for Gambian diaspora organisations involved in community, civil society, social enterprise and cooperative activities in different parts of country.

DDF will expand and enhance the collective remittances sent for community projects. Hometown, district, alumni and sectoral not-for-profit diaspora groups will apply to the DDF to leverage and supplement the resources they raise by themselves. For entrepreneurs, DDF shall provide co-investments, to stimulate and expand job creation.

PREVENTING IRREGULAR MIGRATION

Working with international partners and the Gambian diaspora, the government will provide appropriate protection and support to Gambians abroad, especially distressed and vulnerable migrants, endeavouring to reduce the number of irregular (backway) migrants by 60% by 2021, from the high numbers of 2016.

The end of dictatorship will reduce the rate of irregular and dysfunctional migration, but it will not stop it. The Gambia shares the United Nations' vision that 'migration should be a choice, not a desperate necessity'.

MIGRATION DIALOGUES AND AGREEMENTS

The Gambia will participate actively in global migration dialogues and processes aimed at facilitating safe, orderly and regular migration, endeavouring to sign 4 Migration and Development bilateral agreements by 2021.

The agreements shall be with countries that have high numbers of Gambian citizens, and focus on improved consular services, protection of vulnerable Gambians, portability of social security benefits, training and educational exchanges, investment and job creation in The Gambia.

CIRCULAR AND LABOUR MIGRATION

Working with partners and using global migration processes, Mobility Partnerships, temporary worker schemes and other bilateral arrangements, the government will endeavour to facilitate circular migration contracts for 350 skilled migrant workers by 2021, and set a framework for structured labour migration.

The government will support structured and regulated ethical recruitment agencies, which operate on the best practice standards set by the International Labour Organization (ILO).

FORUMS FOR ENGAGEMENT

On 13 January 2018, the inaugural ‘Stake in the Nation Forum’ was held in The Gambia, as part of ‘Gambian Diaspora Month’, designated for the period 15 December to 14 January. The diaspora shall be able to contribute to policy, strategic and sectoral consultations initiated by different Ministries, Departments and Agencies.

Working with partners, the Gambia Diaspora Directorate shall launch a mobile app, organise 10 online consultative events, and organise 3 ‘Stake in the Nation Forums’, between 2018-21.

DIASPORA-DEVELOPMENT NETWORKS

The most productive members of the diaspora concentrate on their areas of expertise or specialised interest to make inputs to their countries of origin or heritage. A thematic and sectoral approach is one of the most effective forms of engagement for diaspora-development.

Working with partners, the Gambia Diaspora Directorate shall create an online platform of at least 50 Gambian diaspora-development organisations by 2021, covering 10 sectors, operating in 3 continents. The network shall benefit from custom waivers for their projects.

ACCESSING DIASPORA EXPERTISE

The Gambia need schemes to facilitate brain-gain and skills circulation, and counter the negative effects of brain-drain. The expertise of highly skilled professionals in the diaspora can be accessed for specific assignments. They can join and strengthen official Gambian delegations for technical meetings and thematic negotiations.

Working with partners, the Gambia Diaspora Directorate shall facilitate access and utilisation of the services of 100 highly skilled diaspora professionals by 2021.

DIASPORA ELECTORAL VOTING

Section 39 of the 1997 Constitution of The Gambia gives every Gambian citizen the right to vote in Presidential and National Assembly elections, irrespective of residency in The Gambia. Due to the undemocratic nature of the previous dictatorship, the diaspora were never given their constitutional right to vote.

The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) will work with partners to facilitate full registration of diaspora voters, and oversee diaspora voting in future Presidential and National Assembly elections.

EIGHTH REGION OF THE GAMBIA

In 2005, the African Union declared that the African diaspora constitute the sixth region of Africa. Several countries have declared that their diasporas constitute non-resident regions. At the first ‘Stake in the Nation Forum’ on 13 January 2018, the President declared the diaspora as the Eighth Region of The Gambia.

The Ministry of Lands and Regional Government, working with partners shall facilitate 14 representatives of the diaspora to have official Observer Status in the 7 Local Government Areas.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
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Confederaziun svizra

**Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC**

